



Colonel Charles O. Smithers III

Commander, Louisiana Recovery Field Office

Colonel Charles O. Smithers III commands the Memphis District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. As a result of the federal response and recovery efforts for Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, he is forward deployed to Louisiana as the Recovery Field Office (RFO) Commander.

As Louisiana RFO Commander, he is responsible for FEMA Public Engineering Response and Recovery Missions to include: debris removal, temporary roofing, distribution of ice and potable water, emergency power, repair and temporary replacement of critical public facilities, and technical assistance to the affected citizens of Louisiana. He's responsible for individual and public assistance in 21 parishes across the State.

Colonel Smithers took command of the Memphis District in Memphis, TN on July 13, 2004, where he will return once his mission is over in the Gulf Coast area. Before coming to Memphis, he served as the Third U.S. Army/U.S. Army Central Command/Coalition Forces Land Component Command, CFLCC, Assistant Chief of Staff, C7 (Engineer) and as the Deputy Chief of Staff. During his tour at CFLCC, he deployed to Kuwait for Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, where he synchronized Coalition engineering efforts across the Land Component Commander's Area of Operations throughout the U.S. Central Command Area of Responsibility, with focus on operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, Qatar and Kuwait.

Colonel Smithers entered the Army after graduating in 1979 from the U.S. Military Academy in West Point, NY. He has served in command and staff positions from platoon through battalion level, culminating as the Battalion Commander, 14th Engineer Battalion (Combat) (Corps) at Fort Lewis, WA. He has also served as an Assistant Professor of Mathematics at USMA; as an Army National Guard and Army Reserve Advisor; as the Director of Installation Support, U.S. Army Central Command - Kuwait, at Camp Doha, Kuwait; as the first Commander, U.S. Army Central Command - Qatar, Camp As Sayliyah, Qatar; and as Chief, International Affairs Branch, Directorate of Plans, U.S. Space Command.

Colonel Smithers earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Applied Sciences and Engineering from the U.S. Military Academy; a Master of Science degree in Industrial Engineering from the Georgia Institute of Technology; and a Master of Science degree in National Resource Strategy from the Industrial College of the Armed Forces (ICAF), National Defense University.

Colonel Smithers' decorations include the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, Southwest Asia Service Medal with Bronze Star, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary and Service Medals, Ranger Tab/Parachutist Badge, and two Permanent Unit Awards, which include the Joint Meritorious Unit and Army Superior Unit Awards.